

DAVID WEBSTER

Born: Wadsorth, Ohio, USA

Education

MFA – Yale University
BFA – Miami University

Grants

2001 Pollock-Krasner Foundation
1974 Ford Foundation

Selected Solo Exhibitions

2002 Toomey Tourell - San Francisco
Axel Raben - New York City (catalogue)
Linda Durham - Santa Fe
1992 Galerie Montenay - Paris
Beverly Gordon Gallery - Dallas
1990 Galerie Montenay - Paris
1987 Gabrielle Bryers - New York (catalogue)
Guggenheim Collection - Miami
1985 Galerie Jean-Louis Forain - Paris
R Collection & Debra Mannis - Los Angeles
Arthur Roger Gallery - New Orleans
1980 Second Street Gallery - Charlottesville, Virginia
1978 Brickell Place - Miami

Selected Group Exhibitions

2008 French Embassy Cultural Services, "Collection Florence and Daniel Guerlain, Drawings", NYC
Frederieke Taylor Gallery, NYC
FRAC du Picardie, "Anatomie Les Peaud du Dessin", Amiens, France
2007 Museum im Kulturspeicher Wurzburg, Germany, "Diagnosis [Art]-Contemporary Art Reflecting Medicine," May - July.
(catalogue)
Katonah Museum of Art, Katonah, NY, Tools As Art: The Hechinger Collection, Jan - April. (catalogue)
Maryland Art Place, Baltimore, MD, Between the Lines, Jan - Feb. (catalogue)
2006 Museum of Modern Art, New York, Against the Grain: Contemporary Art from the Edward R. Broida Collection, May
- July. (catalogue)
Kunstmuseum Ahlen, Germany, "Diagnosis [Art]-Contemporary Art Reflecting Medicine," October 2006 - January
2007. (catalogue)
2005 Credit Suisse First Boston, NYC
2003 Center of Photography, Woodstock, New York, Divining Fragments: Reconciling The Body.
Cordova Museum - Lincoln, Mass.
Elga Wimmer Gallery - New York, Body Politics.
2001 Fishtank - Brooklyn
2000 Spazio Montenero--Milano, Kamasutra-Arte e Poesia. (catalogue)
Fondation d'Art Contemporain Daniel et Florence Guerlain - France, Le Corps Morcele. (catalogue)
Baltimore Museum of Contemporary Art, Snapshot.
1999 Pittsburgh Art Center - Pittsburgh, Romancing the Brain.

- Hechinger Collection Wash.DC
- 1998 Cynthia Broan Gallery - NYC, A Pound of Flesh.
McKee Gallery - New York, Absolute Secrets.
Islip Art Museum - Islip, New York, The Light Show.
- 1997 Fondation d'Art Contemporain Daniel et Florence Guerlain, Les Mesnuls, France, Hidden Soul. (catalogue)
P.S.1 Museum, Long Island City, New York, Heaven.
Mona Bismark Foundation - Paris, Americans in Paris,
Eighth Floor Gallery - New York
- 1996 Fondation d'Art Contemporain Daniel et Florence Guerlain - Les Mesnuls, France, Inaugural Exhibition.
- 1995 L'un et L'Autre - Paris
Elga Wimmer - New York
- 1994 Stux Gallery - New York, Hypercathexis.
- 1993 Gallery Montenay - Paris
- 1988 Gabrielle Bryars - New York
Galerie Pierre Lescot - Paris
- 1987 Ariette Gimary - Paris
Arteurial - Paris
- 1986 Galerie Guthare-Balin - Paris
- 1985 Pratt Graphics Travelling Show to Taiwan
Museum of Modern Art - Paris, Moscow, Les Mythes de Nos Nippes .
- 1983 Salon de Montrouge - Paris

Public & Corporate Collections

Museum of Modern Art, New York City
Museum of the Southwest, Midland, Texas, Edward R. Broida Bequest
Ellen Noel Art Museum, Odessa, Texas, Edward R. Broida Bequest
Pfizer - New York
AFA Financial - Cleveland, Ohio
Lebow Corporation - New York
French Embassy - Warsaw, Poland
French Embassy - Hanoi, Vietnam
French Consulate - San Francisco
Pedus, Philip Johnson building - New York
Equitable Real Estate - Chicago
Equitable Real Estate - Atlanta
Sumitomo - Seattle
Frito-Lay - Dallas
HBO - New York
O'Melveny & Myers - New York
Davis, Polk, Warrilow - New York
Banque Société Générale - Paris
Orangina - France
Hechinger Collection - Washington, D.C.
Compass - New York City

History

From the Renaissance until the beginning of the modern era, the human body was a central focus of Western painting and sculpture. Artists studied anatomy, worked from live and dead models, and vied with each other in an effort to create convincingly realistic representations of the human form.

David Webster is equally fascinated by the human body, but he starts from the inside out, creating witty formalist abstractions and playful postmodernist sculptures which have their basis in his interest in histology, the microscopic study of plant and animal tissues. While his works frequently have an organic quality, without the titles one might not guess that they were based on x-rays, microscopic

enlargements of cell structures, or medical textbook illustrations of such catastrophic "events" as heart attacks or cerebral hemorrhages.

But since Webster is first and foremost an artist, rather than a scientist, he feels free to alter and reinvent these raw materials for his own aesthetic ends. Thus, in "Digesting Bacon", a recreation of the digestive system painted in a velvety Yves Klein blue lies in a tangle on a minimalist shelf. It is vaguely exotic, suggesting at once an Oriental odalesque and a convoluted hookah. The end points of the system, the mouth and the anus, are coated in gold, enhancing this impression. The title is a play on the digestive system's biological purpose and the English artist Francis Bacon, so famous for his paintings of screaming open mouths.

The digestive system stars again in "Acid Indigestion" where it is drawn as a large spiral. The image is "drawn" on mylar with carefully controlled burn marks which give it a mysterious smoky quality. The end of the spiral is extended with a tail of tiny handwritten words culled from a text about acid indigestion which trails off into a rambling discourse on the origins and remedies for ulcers. Transformed into a spiral, an internal system little mentioned in polite company becomes one with the image of infinity.

In other works cells begin to suggest heavenly bodies, cosmic disturbances, landscapes and formalist stripe paintings. A painting inspired by the cellular structure of hypertension presents a whirl pattern that brings to mind Van Gogh's "Starry Night" while another cell based painting resembles Monet's "Water Lilies". The line between science and art evaporates as medical illustrations morph into formalist paintings.

In the end, Webster's reimagining of human physiology serves as a reminder that, as the artist notes, "The universe can be found within ourselves". All nature is akin and we are inextricably linked to both the smallest cell and the largest star.

-Eleanor Heartney, New York City 2002